

Victor Javier Rodriguez

Graduate Administrative Associate

The Ohio State University

Professional Involvement:

As a first-year Master's student I've had the opportunity to begin my professional journey and become involved in some professional organizations. I do acknowledge I currently hold no formal positions in any of these associations. However, I have taken steps to become further involved at my institution within various capacities outside of my assistantship and program. Namely, my involvement within the Office of the Vice President for Student Life's Annual Inclusive Leadership Retreat. This small committee is made up of four graduate students across the Office of Student Life and we put plan, coordinate, and execute a weekend experience about leadership, inclusivity, social justice and equity. The experience has been exhilarating! From travel/lodging logistics to intentional curriculum building. We are shaping to have an amazing weekend this April. Although, I am not currently involved within committees or hold official titles within professional organizations. I am interested in furthering my commitments to said organizations, and intentionally contributing to our field and associations. I am currently a member of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), Ohio College Personnel Association (OCPA), National Association for Campus Activities (NACA), and lastly Association for Fraternity and Sorority Advisors (AFA). I had the opportunity to present at both OCPA and at Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values (AFLV) this past year.

Why are you interested in participating as a member of the OCPA Executive Board?

As I mentioned, I am interested in furthering my involvement within professional associations by seeking intentional opportunities to contribute to our field. Serving as a member OCPA executive board and representing graduate students as "at large", I would have the awesome opportunity to represent all graduate students across the great state of Ohio to best of my abilities. I would focus on engaging graduate students from across the state to form a stronger community and professional networks. Transition and acclimation into graduate programs can at times be extremely difficult, within this role I feel as though I can not only form the network of colleagues but also work to create pathways to careers in the future. The opportunity to coordinate and support the Case Study competition at OCPA is also of high interest to me, as I participated and saw areas of improvement. I am also committed to the support and sustainability of OCPA and the annual conference, I want to contribute creative ideas and support opportunities for graduate students to become further engaged in our state association. I would also like the opportunity to bring agency between emerging, established and graduate students with the support and guidance of the board.

What qualities and skills do you think you can bring to the indicated position(s) and to the OCPA Board?

Intentionality, inclusivity, collaboration, and self-motivated work ethic. I pride myself in intentional involvement and engagement. I actively seek ways to improve organizations through collaboration and creative engagement with my team. We consistently view/critique systems which bar participation of various groups, even within our field (who knew?!) I have grown attentive to be aware of who is or who isn't represented and advocate for "make spaces at the table". The skills I would contribute to the position are my high-levels of autonomy, flexibility/adaptability, special attention to administrative duties. I thrive in environments where I am afforded the opportunity to not only take independent initiatives but I also love to be in team environments where separate projects/task culminate into a wonderful organization. Flexibility/adaptability has been the crux of my learning curve in my first-year of graduate college. From residence hall mergers into a residence complex, to sudden program shifts and departmental changes. Luckily, I have been successful and thrived in these environments. Lastly, I pride myself in my administrative strength, my supervisor has mentioned to me that the grasp in this realm far exceeds his expectations for a first-year graduate student, especially in items involving housing, when I did not possess any experience in housing prior to graduate school. With these things mentioned, I feel I could contribute to a team, I also must mention I love the opportunity for feedback and learning moments! Being a member of the executive board would be a great opportunity to learn and grow.

What do you believe to be the role of professional associations like OCPA?

My view of the role professional organizations like OCPA, is the role of constituent service. My mentors have instilled within me the need to always give back, especially with organizations/associations. Professional associations at their core should serve as a bridge between professionals, academia, and best practices. As we move through our professional journeys, I recognize the dissonance which may occur when we are no longer in the classroom. Acknowledging this, professional organizations are those gap fillers between practitioners and new information in our field, which we know is ever changing. I also believe professional organizations can provide spaces for professionals to network new ideas amongst colleagues. Lastly, the organizations can create spaces for professionals to seek support, if they are not supported in certain environments, an extended family of sorts. The current climate of our nation and as culture shifts begin to take root, I believe now more than ever, professional associations need to be more vocal and serve as advocates for constituents.